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Martha and Ralph Williams make gift to UMM music department

Summary:

(October 13, 2004)-A gift to the University of Minnesota, Morris from Martha and Ralph Williams, professor emeritus of music, has been used to purchase a beautiful, high quality quilted cover for the concert grand piano in the Recital Hall of Humanities Fine Arts.

“This is a wonderful gift to our music department,” stated Dr. Jim “Doc” Carlson, professor of music. “The cover will protect our concert grand piano, ensuring its beauty for years to come. It is especially appropriate to receive this gift from Martha and Ralph, two longtime members of the community and important figures in our campus history.”

Ralph was UMM’s first band and choir director when the college opened its doors in 1960. He is credited with helping establish a quality music program that has grown in excellence throughout the years. Ralph retired in 1978.

In addition to a band and choir, Ralph also assembled an orchestra with musicians from the University community and the surrounding area. Martha played violin in the orchestra for over 18 years. She is also an accomplished pianist. Martha served as UMM’s post office supervisor until her retirement in 1992.

Both Martha and Ralph are very pleased with the quality of UMM’s current music program. “It is terrific,” stated Ralph. “Everyone in the music department is doing a great job.”

After purchasing the piano cover, a portion of the Williams gift remains. Martha and Ralph have asked that the remainder be directed to the Humanities Fine Arts Phase III Fund. They look forward to when this new performing arts facility will be built as an addition to the current building, and also to hearing beautiful three manual pipe organ music in the still-to-be-built performance space. The Phase III Fund will be used to support the planning stage and fund a feasibility study for the proposed Phase III project.

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